



“Restoration of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear River) for Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and the European Otter”

Press Release

10th February 2012

MulkearLIFE Welcomes IFI Barriers Group

MulkearLIFE was delighted to have the opportunity this week to welcome the Barriers Working Group from Inland Fisheries Ireland to Limerick. The Barriers Group is a panel of fish passage experts working to minimise the effects of barriers. Barriers are obstacles that inhibit or block fish passage. Typical obstacles are weirs, culverts, dams, bridge aprons and waterfalls.

MulkearLIFE facilitated the Barriers Group with a presentation and field trip to a local barrier on the Lower Mulkear. On the first day of their meeting, MulkearLIFE gave a detailed presentation on the objectives and programme of work of MulkearLIFE and outlined the considerable achievements of the project to date. The first part of the presentation focused on sea lamprey passage. The Barriers Group were particularly interested in MulkearLIFE’s approach to addressing sea lamprey passage at Annacotty weir and other upstream barriers to assist in the upstream passage of sea lamprey to their spawning beds in the upper reaches of the catchment. The second part of the presentation focused on illustrating passage problems at Ballyclogh weir. This is where technical expertise of the Barriers Group was invaluable and their advice extremely helpful. MulkearLIFE was joined by project partner, OPW for the presentation.

The following day the Barriers Group visited Ballyclogh weir to see the weir at first hand. The group members were able to see the difficulties with fish passage at the weir and make several recommendations on how passage could be improved. A lively bankside discussion ensued on the pros and cons of various options. Further research into various passage options is now underway and a detailed plan for this particular will be developed over the next number of months. The Barriers Group then proceed to move on to other barriers in the Shannon Region with IFI colleagues from Limerick and Kerry.

MulkearLIFE would like to express its appreciation to the IFI Barriers Group for their technical input. The Project Team looks forward to working with the Barriers Group, the Office of Public Works and local angling bodies, to address the concerns at Ballyclogh weir.

Notes for Editors

1. High Resolution Digital Images are available to accompany this Press Release.
2. Interviews can be arranged with the Project Manager by using the contact details below.
3. MulkearLIFE is a new €1.75 million European Commission funded LIFE Nature project working on the restoration of the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (with a focus on the Mulkear River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Further details may be viewed on the project website www.mulkearlifeproject.com
4. Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick) is lead partner together with the OPW and Limerick County Council. Additional funding support comes from National Parks and Wildlife Service. Other supporters include Teagasc, IFA, ICMSA, and local angling groups.
5. The project is one of the first and most important integrated catchment management projects in Ireland. It is a flagship EU LIFE Nature project –covering some 650 sq km which contain a variety of habitats and protected

species. Much of the area is designated as a Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the EU Habitats Directive and forms part of the Natura 2000 Network.

Issued by:

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